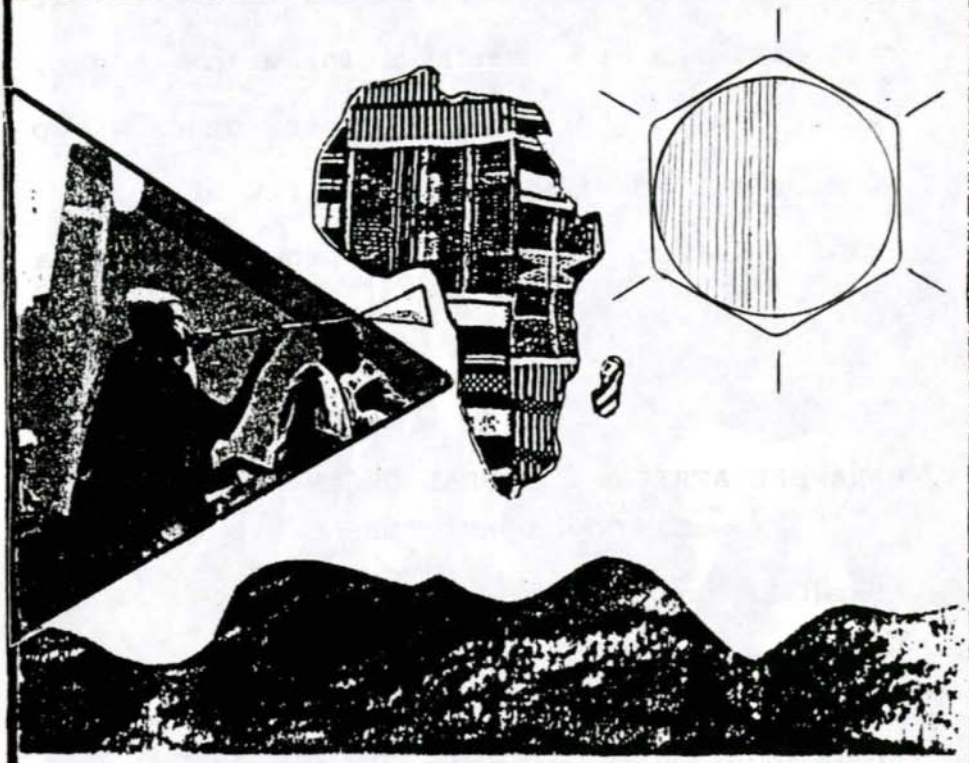
HARAMBEE FLAME

VOLUME XVII No. 12 December 1996



In This Edition –

Commentary: What Chile Be Dis?; **From Other Sources:** Record Store In Harlem Rises From Ashes, Dump Santa Campaign, European Economic Control In Azania, African Woman Makes Political History in N.C., "Conjure Women" Explores Work of African Women Artists, Bonds Between Africans and Native Americans Celebrated; **Back In Time:** The Driver; **Publications; Announcements; ...**

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTYURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other group of people. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman) - Shaheed Khaleel Hamza

Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee - Kafele

Eleto(Admin. Chrmn.) - Nbassa(Courtney Starks)

Olotu Eko(Education Chrmn.) - Mondo

Akapo(Treasurer) - Tyrone Hayes

Akowe(Secretary) - Jabari(Dexter Brown)

Akewi(Librarian) - Neb(Howard Nash)

COMMENTARY

Suppose it happened to you. You're African. Your mate is African. And come birth time, out comes a European baby. "Surprise" wouldn't be quite the word to describe the look on your face. The above picture is copied from

a Rockshots, Inc. card, entitled "What Chile." No question but that the card is funny. But there's more than humor involved here, whatever the actual intent of the designer. If we look at the picture as a symbol of the historical mythologies, cultural/political intrigues, etc. that have accompanied the journey of Jesus through time, what is comical on the surface gets serious beneath it. This African couple, shocked and horrified by the color and other features of their new-born, could be interpreted as representing the lineage that produced Jesus--a lineage comprised of Africans and Asians.

"The genealogical information about Jesus Christ is provided us in two gospels: Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-28. These genealogical tables are reliable, providing detailed information about the Lord's ancestry...Matthew's information provides the line of official succession to the Davidic throne, and Luke's information gives details of the actual physical ancestors of Joseph back to David...It is virtually without disagreement among biblical scholars that Mary as well as Joseph was 'of the house of David'(Luke 1:27, RSV; cf. Luke 2:4). This blood relation of Mary to her forefather King David is corroborated by other Scripture(see Luke 1:32, 69; Matthew 9:27; 15:22; 20:30, 31; Mark 10:47, 48)."

-Rev. Walter Arthur McCray, as quoted in William Moseley's WHAT COLOR WAS JESUS

"In early Christian art, Jesus is almost invarioubly represented as black-skinned. 'In the pictures and portraits of Christ by the early Christians', Kersey Graves asserted, 'he is uniformly represented as being black. And to make this the more certain, the red tinge is given to the lips; and the only text in the Christian Bible, quoted by orthodox Christians as describing his complexion, represents it as being black. Solomon's declaration 'I am black, but comely, Oh ye daughters of Jerusalem'(Solomon, 1, 5), is often cited as referring to Christ..."

-John G. Jackson, from his book, MAN, GOD, AND CIVILIZATION

"We can now return to the question of the race of Jesus of Nazareth. His mother, Mary, was Afro-Asiatic and probably looked like a typical Yemenite, Trinidadian, or African American of today. Consider a few inescapable factors that challenge the traditional perception of the Madonna and Child. In Matt. 2:15 and Hos. 11:1 we find the words, 'Out of Egypt, I have called my son'. This passage is part of the notorious flight into Egypt, which describes Mary and Joseph's attempt to hide the one that King Herod feared would displace him. Imagine the divine family as Europeans **hiding** in Africa!...Many in the 1990s who think of a black Jesus as an oddity or scandalous distortion of historical facts insist that Jesus was Semitic, or Middle Eastern. However, to call Jesus Semitic does not take us very far, because this nineteenth-century term refers not to a racial type, but to a family of languages including both Hebrew and Ethiopic."

-Introduction to ORIGINAL AFRICAN HERITAGE EDITION, KING JAMES VERSION, HOLY BIBLE

"The early Christian Church, which had its beginnings in North Africa[Egypt] more than one hundred years before it reached Europe[Rome and Greece] in its organized institutional form, presented artifacts, drawings, statues, documents, and other artifacts in evidence which depicted the Madonna and Christ Child[Mary and Jesus Christ] as a **Black** woman and her **Black** child. The image of a **Black Madonna and Child** was nothing more or less than the adoptation of the fertility symbol of Egypt's and Nubia's **Isis**[the Mother or Madonna] and **Horus**[the Child]. The extent to which this statue was held in very high esteem in the eyes of ancient Christians is best demonstrated by the Scala Santa in Rome, Italy; a figure of the **"Black Virgin"** with an auroa of light that engulfs her and the **"Black Christ Child"** she holds in her arms."

-Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan from his book, BLACK MAN OF THE NILE AND HIS FAMILY.

The fact is that there is not much evidence outside scrip-

tures of an actual historical Jesus. However, if we accept the scriptural story of Jesus, we have to accept that this person was African, Asiatic, or Afro-Asiatic because of the fact that the people who lived in the region where he is said to have lived were African, Asian, and Afro-Asiatic. Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan's passage speaks of Jesus and Mary as being nothing more or less than a perpetuation of the Kemetic("Egyptian") myth of Isis and Horus(Auset and Heru). But whether Jesus was an actual person or a mythical one, he was clearly not a European. So the question becomes why and how did this Jesus come to be Europeanized?

"Absolutely critical to the white supremacy system of religious thought was the formation of the image of a **white man** as the 'son' of God. This white male image then was referred to as 'Christ'...

"Couple this image and concept of God as a **white man** with the white supremacy system's formal definition of God as 'the supreme or ultimate reality; the Being perfect in power, wisdom and goodness whom men worship as creator and ruler of the universe'. Then of absolute necessity, the logic circuits of the human brain-computer have to print out 'The white man(as God, the father of the white male Christ) is the supreme or ultimate reality; the white man is the Being, perfect in power, wisdom and goodness whom all men should worship as creator and ruler of the universe'.

-Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, from THE ISIS PAPERS: THE KEYS TO THE COLORS

Sister Welsing puts forward the theory that Europeans emerged from an albino population of Africans who had migrated from Africa to Europe. The following passage, also from the above, begins from where she has concluded remarks on this theoretical construction.

"There, they increased in number and eventually returned to conquer the peoples of color in Africa, Asia and the rest of the world. They returned with the idea that they would conquer and no longer think of themselves as the

(Cont. on page 11)

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can be stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Record Store In Harlem Rises From Ashes

"Over 100 people attended the grand opening of the record store[Record Shack on 125th Street in Harlem] Saturday, which was gutted by flames last Dec. 8 when a distraught man, Roland Smith, allegedly entered a clothing store, Freddy's, next door to the record shop and allegedly killed himself after starting the fire, which killed seven people...

"[Rev. Al]Sharpton was among the protestors who were in front of Freddy's who demanded that Fred Harari, the owner of Freddy's, cease his eviction of Shange, who was his subleasee. Harari, a white Jewish-American, who was during that same period trying to evict a coffee shop owner in the South Bronx because he wanted to expand his store, would not relent, so the protest continued.

"After the fire erupted, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the police department, and the white press blamed Sharpton for inciting the incident; a subsequent investigation by the city proved that neither Sharpton nor his words had anything to do with Smith's actions, and that he acted on his own.

"The investigation also cleared the names of Shange[Shikulu Shange, owner of Record Shack and a native South African] and Morris Powell, head of the now-defunct 125th Street Vendors Association...

"Days after the fire, Harari's name was surrounded in more scandal--he was charged with paying his employees, those that died in the fire, far beneath the legal minimum wage and paying them off the record, therefore avoiding paying taxes on their salaries, social security, and workman's compensation.

"The investigation by the fire department found that the sprinklers were not working, the fire exit was bricked in and that the only exit was a hole that only the manager (who escaped) knew about..."

-from "After Tragic Fire Shikulu Shange's Record Shack Opens," page 41, Dec. 14 NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS(N.Y., N.Y.)

Dump Santa Campaign

"Rev. Curtis E. Gatewood, the president of Durham, N.C.'s chapter of the NAACP has decided--out of religious conviction--to encourage families to 'dump Santa' when they celebrate on December 24 and 25.

"Since last year, Mr. Gatewood has asked Christians to forgo a commercialized Christmas that is exploitative of the real meaning of the birth of Jesus. Pressure to shop and spend, he said, 'diminishes the role of Christ. Somehow Santa Claus has become more the hero and the deliverer than Christ, whose birthday we're supposed to be honoring'.

"He and his local NAACP chapter have organized the 'Boycott Santa Campaign', which is targeted toward the Black community...

"Last year, the Santa Boycott received national media coverage. For the first time in more than a decade, economists reported a drop in retail sales following the holiday season.

"'We don't know if the drastic decrease has anything to do with our campaign directly', said Rev. Gatewood. However, according to Durham NAACP officials, the media has been very reluctant to tackle this story again...

"Random questioning by The Final Call shows that, when asked ' 'What does Christmas mean'?, eight out of every ten Black children mentioned Santa first. They also mentioned toys, reindeer and Christmas lights. Many had to be asked about Jesus before they mentioned that it was his birthday..."

-from "Group Seeks To Dump Santa From Christmas," pages 5 and 25, Dec. 10 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

European Economic Control In Azania Continues

"The broad picture here is that investors are slowly moving back into the country following the removal of apartheid, but the effects of the system, which reserved menial, underpaid jobs for Black workers, still have to be undone.

"Coca Cola Canners of Southern Africa(CCSA) unveiled its state-of-the-art, 2,000 cans-per-minute factory complex in Germiston, on the eastern periphery of Johannesburg....

"[Loyiso Sikweze, acting chairman of the Food and Allied Workers Union at the factory] said Blacks still had no real power, were promoted into window-dressing positions and that remnants of apartheid were still in place...

"South Africa has been battling to improve its investment profile, empower its downtrodden Black majority and beef up productivity levels that are way below international standards.

"But the pace has been painstakingly slow, especially for Blacks. At present there are only 17 Black-owned companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, controlling only six percent of the market. Affirmative action aimed at putting Blacks on par with whites is still to make an impact on the distribution of management jobs between the races. Over the past four years the number of white middle managers has in fact risen by 1.8 percent and the number of white senior managers has dropped by just 1.3. percent.

"According to the FSA Contact, and independent analyst, there has only been a 0.4 percent rise in Black senior managers over the last four years...

"Since the 1994 all-race elections, American companies have been entering the country at a rate of nearly four a month. IBM was the biggest returnee in terms of turnover, with its sales in South Africa amounting to $414 million last year, while Ford was the largest in terms of assets at $156 million."

-from "Discrimination Alive And Well In South Africa?", page 13, Dec. 10 THE FINAL CALL

African Woman Makes Political History In North Carolina

"Some old fashioned door to door campaigning, along with high Black voter turn-out in this eastern North Carolina county resulted in history being made Nov. 5th. Florence Bryant became the first African American woman elected to the Tyrrell County Commission and the first person to win without the blessing of the Democratic and Republican parties. Bryant ran as 'unaffiliated' after neither party showed interest before and during the primaries in the staunch advocate for poor and working people...

"Bryant intends to continue her advocacy for affordable housing. She directs a local 'action' group which does service and advocacy for more affordable housing, for banks to end 'redlining'(where they refuse to give loans in 'certain' areas)."

-from "Black Independent Wins County Seat," page 2, Dec. JUSTICE SPEAKS(Raleigh, N.C.)

"Conjure Women" Explores Work Of African Women Artists

"'Conjure Women', a film exploring the work and philosophy of four African American female artists has its national television premiere on Wednesday, February 5, 1997...Award-winning film maker Demetria Royals and producer Louise Diamond have turned their camera on four women who are claiming increasingly wider recognition in the arts: Vocalist/composer Cassandra Wilson, whom TIME magazine this year called 'America's most important daring jazz vocalist'; Visual artist/photographer Carrie Mae Weems, who recently had a national tour of a 15-year retrospective of her work organized by the Washington, DC-based National Museum of Women in the Arts; Performance artist Robbie McCauley, creator of 'Sally's Rape', winner of a 1992 OBIE Award for Best New American Play; Choreographer/dancer Anita Gonzalez, a founding member of the dance/theater company, Urban Bush Women.

"'Born and educated in the West, they are now using their disciplines to reclaim their 'Africanisms', an intuitive experience of what could not be codified and what their

foreparents had to deny if they were to survive', Royals says of the artists in 'Conjure Women'...

"'Conjure Women' had its world premiere at the 1995 Mill Valley Film Festival in California and was seen at the 1996 SLAMDANCE Festival in Utah before traveling to other film festivals. In the fall of 1996 'Conjure Women' was named one of three 'Prized Pieces' in the Cultural Affairs Documentary category of the 15th Annual International Film and Video Competition sponsored by the National Black Programming Consortium of Columbus, Ohio...

"As part of a national outreach initiative, 'Conjure Women' will be screened in advance of the PBS air date at women's prisons, public high schools, colleges and museums in New York, the Washington, DC area and on the West Coast. Demetria Royals and other artists featured in the film will be on hand for discussions with audience members in November and January..."

-from "'Conjure Women' Premieres On PBS," pages 17 and 18, winter edition AIM QUARTERLY Magazine(Chicago, IL.)

Bonds Between Africans and Native Americans Celebrated

"While most people were eating turkey for Thanksgiving, pilgrim-style, the Harlem-based Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood offered the community a consciousness-raising alternative with its first annual Original Nations Day Celebration.

"The event kicked off with African drumming. According to Imam Talib Abdur-Rashad, the spiritual head of the mosque, the affair was held to celebrate the 1,300-year 'bond between the Kushite[Black] nation in North America and the original Native Americans'...

"Mahir Abdal-Razzaaq El was the scheduled keynote speaker but he was unable to make it. So a narrative, 'Digging for the Red Roots', (Message magazine, July 1996) he wrote was read. Abdal-Razzaaq El, a Cherokee Blackfoot, serves

(Concluded on inside back cover)

rejected and diseased population; instead, they would think of themselves, in compensation, as the superior and supreme supermen and look upon all skin-pigmented peoples as the 'genetic inferiors'.

"With the necessity for such a **compensatory** ideology and concept of self as superior, the white psyche could tolerate no concept of anything **higher** than the white self--not even God. Thus, when the concept of the son of God was formulated, in their thinking, the 'son' eventually took the form of a white man, which by brain-computer logic would mean that God himself had to be a white man. Thus, the white collective, in **logical reality**, is not in worship of any force beyond itself."

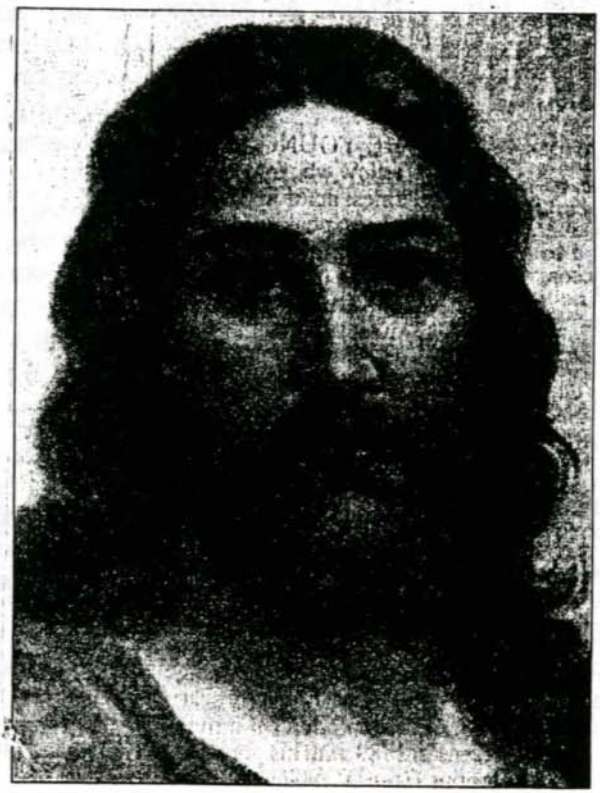


Photo courtesy: Gospa Missions Evans City, PA

Read and understand why Jesus Christ is one Person with two Natures – Divine and Human – God and Man.

When, in the years 1510-12(approximate), Michaelangelo painted the "Holy Family" on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the commission of Pope Julius II, this was only about twenty years after Cristobal Colon(Christopher Columbus)'s stumbling into("discovery") the "New World," as well as the Spanish victory over the Moors(Arabs and Africans) in Granada. And by 1502, Africans had been brought to the Americas for slave labor. Led by Spain and Portugal, Europe was beginning to emerge as a power on the world scene. Under the banners of militarism and Christianity and motivated by dreams of riches and more riches, Europeans were making their presence felt in the Americas, Africa, and Asia(via the spice trade).

Michaelangelo's portrayal, through use of family members as models, of the "Holy Family" as Europeans was not the first instance of such a portrayal. But the timing of it, coinciding with emerging European influence on the rest of the world, was opportune. A European("white ") god gave Europeans a means of stepping out of the pessimism which had been brought on by the plague, internal chaos and violence, widespread hunger, etc. Spurred on by the self-righteous spirit of the "Crusades," Europeans, having created a god that looked like them, could seek conquests with "God on our side." Furthermore, they could rationalize away their hungers for material riches, power, and bloodshed as being an obligation to bring Christ and "salvation" to the "pagan" world.

And, finally, with divinity being equated with Europeanness/whiteness, we get the color, white, as a metaphor for goodness, purity, innocence, virginity, etc. On the other end of this color scheme, we have "black-hearted"/evil, the "dark continent"/uncivilized land, and so forth. In short, the whitenizing of Jesus and the elevation of him from status as a prophet to that of Son of God has benefitted Europeans/Caucasians immensely and been devastating to us. Clearly, as long as we continue--those of us who do--accepting an identity of the Creator that is the same as that of our oppressor, we will continue to be the oppressor's victims.

-Editor

Commanding a higher price in the market and a greater consideration from the master than even the slave artisan was the foreman. Hand-picked for his trustworthiness, sound judgement, and impressive physical stature, the driver, as he was popularly known, was the right-hand man of the overseer, the plantation's general superintendent. He had a variety of responsibilities. In the morning it was he who blew the horn that called the hands to work. When they reached the fields, he laid out the specific work each slave was to be responsible for, and he checked at day's end to see that it had been done. If the slaves worked in gangs, rather than by the assigned-task system, it was the driver who spurred them on, either with loud exhortations or by a flick of the whip. He gave the signals for the early afternoon meal break and for putting away the tools at dusk.

When night fell, the driver was charged with maintaining peace and quiet along slave row, his authority not being limited to field labor but extending "to the general deportment of the negroes," as a contemporary puts it. If a slave proved to be unruly in the quarters, just as if he proved balky in the fields, it was the function of the driver to do the whipping. The severity of his blows reflected something of his own personality: if he were power-drunk or closely identified himself with the master, his whip would be heavy, but if he sympathized with his fellow slave he would make the whip crackle within a hair's breadth of the culprit's bare back...

Aside from the human satisfaction of lording it over others, the driver had other rewards. Often he was exempt from field labor. He received a better ration, which might include a weekly bottle of rum. He was better clad, some masters holding that this was a way by which he could command the respect of the slaves under him.

Source: THE NEGRO IN THE MAKING OF AMERICA by Benjamin Quarles

PUBLICATIONS

MOBETTER NEWS
P.O. Box 1447
South Holland, IL. 60473

THE FINAL CALL
FCN Publishing
734 W. 79th. St.
Chicago, IL. 60620

CROSSROAD
Spear & Shield Publ.
1340 W. Irving Park Rd.
Suite 108
Chicago, IL. 60613

PRISON LAW PROJECT
Newsletter
National Lawyers Guild
558 Capp St.
San Francisco, CA. 94110

THIS JUST IN
Bulletin for News of Political Prisoners & POWs
103 Bartlett Ave.
Pittsfield, MA. 01201

MESSAGE FROM THE GRASSROOTS
P.O. Box 44192
Los Angeles, CA.90044

JUSTICE SPEAKS
P.O. Box 1339
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27802

N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS
2340 Frederick Douglass Blvd.
N.Y., N.Y. 10027

COALITION FOR PRISONERS' RIGHTS
Newsletter
P.O. Box 1911
Santa Fe, N.M. 87504-1911

BRITE MOMENTS
P.O. Box 90994
Nashville, TN. 37209

One of among many ancestors upon whom we will call during the seven days of Kwanzaa

May the spirits of our ancestors deliver to us, through the examples they set for us, whatever additional stamina we may require for the path that lies ahead pf us.

Toussaint L'Ouverture

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Florence Nelson, editor of the Neighborhood Action In Fact Neighborhood Association Newsletter, is calling for submissions of articles. To submit articles, send them to P.O. Box 111265; Omaha, NE.; 68111.

The 1996 edition of A JAILHOUSE LAWYER"S MANUAL(JLM) is now available. The 989-page legal self-help guide completely updates previous JLM editions and supplements...[It] serves as an excellent guide for those seeking a comprehensive introduction to the legal issues confronting prisoners...For information on price, etc., write to Columbia Human Rights Law Review; Box B-25; Columbia University School of Law; 435 West 116 St.; New York, New York; 10027.

The National Plebiscite Education Campaign for Self-Determination(NPECSD) is a project ot the New Afrikan Liberation Front. The purpose of the NPECSD is to raise public consciousness among Africans born in the U.S. regarding their collective rights to self-determination(Kujichagulia) and how that is attained...Toward this aim, it is the mission of the NPECSD to develop and launch a mass political education outreach campaign to the Black(New Afrikan) community. Goals and purpose: -To foster concepts of self determination, sovereignty(self government) and National Independence. -To illustrate clearly how self government is our sociopolitical, economic and spiritual salvation as a people. Our survival must be first and foremost in our hearts, minds and in our actions. -To impart and instill hope within the Black(New Afrikan) community and to illuminate the vast array of resources available to us when we function as a united people. We must work towards collective work and responsibility(Ujima). -To raise Black (New Afrikan) community awareness of our historical greatness and our prophetic destiny towards freedom, justice, equality, independence and Black(New Afrikan) Liberation. -Lastly, the primary goal of the NPECSD is to culminate with an enlightened Black(New Afrikan) populace that is prepared to cast a well informed vote as to our national destiny. The NPECSD is open to organizations and individuals working for the spiritual, cultural, political and economic upliftment of the African community in the United States...To involve your family, school, church, group, or business in this historic process, simply

From Other Sources(Conclusion)

as a Pipe Carrier Warrior for the northeastern band of Cherokee Indians in New York City..."

-from "Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood Observes Real Thanksgiving, Native American Style," page 6, Dec. 7 N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS

Announcements(Conclusion)

contact us at:

National Plebiscite Education Campaign For Self Determination(NPECSD)
P.O. Box 3585
Oakland, CA. 94609
510/635-7933